

Appl. No. 10/056,226  
Reply to Office Action of December 3, 2003

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 14, 17, and 18 are canceled herein without prejudice or disclaimer to the subject matter.

Claim 16 is amended herein into independent form, incorporating limitations formerly recited in claim 14, from which claim 16 previously depended. Claims 19 and 20 similarly are amended into independent form, incorporating limitations formerly recited in claim 18, from which they previously depended.

Claims 15 and 22, which previously depended from canceled claim 14, are amended to depend from claim 16, which now includes limitations formerly recited in claim 16. Claim 24, which previously depended from claim 18, likewise is amended to depend from claim 19, which now includes limitations formerly recited in claim 18. Claim 23, which includes limitations similar to those in claim 24, is amended to depend from claim 20, which now also includes limitations formerly recited in claim 18.

No new matter has been added. Claims 1-13, 15, 16, and 19-24 are pending in the application.

In the Office Action, claim 14 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Lester et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,475,284). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claim 14 is canceled herein, rendering the rejection moot. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested. Applicants do not concede the correctness of the rejection.

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Claims 14, 15, 17, 22, and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Paul et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,677,602). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claims 14 and 17 are canceled herein, rendering that portion of the rejection moot. Claims 15 and 22 are amended to depend from claim 16, which is identified in the Office Action as including allowable subject matter. Claim 23 likewise is amended to depend from claim 19, which is identified in the Office Action as including allowable subject matter. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested. Applicants do not concede the correctness of the rejection.

Claim 18 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Ribarich et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,316,887). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claim 18 is canceled herein, rendering the rejection moot. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested. Applicants do not concede the correctness of the rejection.

Claims 18 and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Trestman et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,677,602). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claim 18 is canceled herein, rendering that portion of the rejection moot. Claims 24 is amended to depend from claim 20, which is identified in the Office Action as including allowable subject matter. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested. Applicants do not concede the correctness of the rejection.

Claim 18 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Maheshwari et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,932,976). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

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Claim 18 is canceled herein, rendering the rejection moot. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested. Applicants do not concede the correctness of the rejection.

Claim 14 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being anticipated by Yamashita et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,002,215) in view of Paul. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claim 14 is canceled herein, rendering the rejection moot. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested. Applicants do not concede the correctness of the rejection.

Applicants appreciate the allowance of claims 1-13 and 21, and the determination that claims 16, 19, and 20 include allowable subject matter. Applicants do not concede that these allowed and allowable claims are allowable only for the reasons indicated in the Office Action.

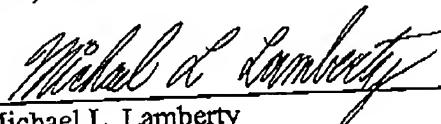
As all matters raised in the Office Action are now addressed, Applicants believe all pending claims likewise are in condition for immediate allowance. Favorable reconsideration in the form of a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

If a telephone conference would be helpful in resolving any issues concerning this communication, please contact the undersigned at (612) 336-4789, or Applicants' primary attorney of record, Michael D. Schumann (Reg. No. 30,422) at (612) 336-4638.

Respectfully submitted,



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